

*The President.* In Florida.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:10 a.m. in the West Wing Lobby Entrance at the White

House, upon the President's return from the Historical Washington Navy Yard. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Prime Minister  
John Howard of Australia  
*September 10, 2001*

*Australia-U.S. Free Trade Agreement*

Q. Mr. President, how do you feel about a free trade agreement with Australia?

*President Bush.* We've had a good discussion about it.

Q. Progress, sir?

*President Bush.* I think we've made some good progress; you bet. I appreciate the Prime Minister being here. Australia is a great friend to the United States, and it's an honor to welcome him and the delegation here.

Q. Does the agreement still have to wait until after the FDA here?

*President Bush.* We're making good progress. He's certainly making a good case.

*Legislative Agenda*

Q. Mr. President, if you had to choose between education and your tax cut, which would you choose?

*President Bush.* I'm going to Florida today—

Q. Have fun.

*President Bush.* —to talk about education.

I hope the Australian press is kinder to you than the American press is to me.

*Bush-Howard Discussions*

Q. How have you found the discussions—

*Prime Minister Howard.* Dennis? You heard that, Dennis?

Q. Yes?

*Prime Minister Howard.* You just listen to the man. He speaks great common sense. [Laughter]

Q. Mr. Howard, how have you found the discussions so far with Mr. Bush?

*Prime Minister Howard.* Very good. I mean, we are very close friends. We covered just about everything you could cover in the time. We're going to continue over lunch to talk about some of the regional issues. And it's a great opportunity to reinforce what a deep friendship it is. And the President and I have a great similarity of views on many issues, and it's a great experience to be able to exchange them with somebody who holds the views he does.

Q. Have you provided an update on the—

*Prime Minister Howard.* I can't hear you; I'm sorry.

Q. Have you provided an update on the HMAS *Manoora* at all?

*Prime Minister Howard.* Haven't discussed it.

*U.S. Open Tennis Tournament*

Q. Mr. President, do you congratulate Lleyton Hewitt for winning the U.S. Open?

*President Bush.* Yes, I do. Man, you talk about a guy who can play tennis. He was—clearly tennis is one of Australia's best exports.

By the way, now that you're here, I do want to say hello to my old friend John Newcombe. I knew him years ago; he represents the best of Australia. And by the way, we get along well, because if there's

any place that's like Texas, it's Australia—which is a high compliment, I want you to know.

*Bush-Howard Discussions*

Q. Mr. President, do you see a role for Australia in the development of your—

*President Bush.* I do. They're close allies. We'll have close consultation. I look forward to the Prime Minister's continuing advice. We have had great discussions about the Far East, and his advice is very valuable

for our foreign policy. There's nothing like a friend who will tell the truth.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:20 a.m. on the West Colonnade at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to former Australian Davis Cup captain John Newcombe. A reporter referred to the HMAS *Manoora*, an Australian naval ship which held several hundred asylum seekers refused entry into Australia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Australia on the U.S.-Australia Alliance  
*September 10, 2001*

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister John Howard today commemorated the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-Australia alliance.

The two leaders reaffirmed that the alliance is an alliance between two peoples, tied by bonds of law and language, united by a history of shared struggle and sacrifice in defense of freedom and democracy, and finding new strength in the challenges of a changing world.

The President and the Prime Minister agreed that for fifty years, the friendship between the United States and Australia has advanced the cause of stability and security within the Asia-Pacific region and indeed throughout the world. The aspirations we have shared, for peace and prosperity for all, remain as firmly held as ever.

President Bush and Prime Minister Howard solemnly reaffirmed the commitment of the United States and Australia to the alliance under the ANZUS Treaty. They pledged anew their intent to strive together to promote order and goodwill between nations and to ensure that the alliance continues to play its vital role in preserving peace throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to ANZUS, the Security Treaty Between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and Australia  
*September 10, 2001*

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister John Howard today reaffirmed the

strength and vitality of the bilateral relationship between Australia and the United